

ABSTRACT*In one**al*  
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~~One aspect of the invention provides a novel~~ scheme to  
preserve the failure state of a memory location, ~~According to~~  
~~one embodiment,~~ the data is read from a memory location in a  
5 read-destructive memory device. If the data is found to be  
valid (uncorrupted) it is written back to the memory location  
from where it was read in order to preserve it. If the data  
is found to be invalid (corrupted) then a failure codeword is  
written in the memory location to indicate a failure of the  
10 memory location. The failure codeword may be preselected or  
dynamically calculated so that it has a mathematical distance  
greater than all correctable data patterns.